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CIA-RDP92T00306R000300080006-7

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14 January 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Intelligence

VIA: Director of East Asian Analysis

FROM: OEA/SEA/IB
DDI Representative on SNIE 56-88SUBJECT: SNIE 56-88 (formerly 56-2-87): The Philippines:
Problems and Prospects for the Aquino Government

1. The 11 January interagency coordination session on the draft Concept Paper and Terms of Reference produced no surprises--the Terms of Reference was accepted by all representatives, with qualifications noted by INR and DIA. The NIO is planning to get the SNIE to the NFIB by late February.

2. The INR and DIA representatives favor a more optimistic estimate that includes a confident prognosis for the Aquino government. CIA and other DIA analysts question whether Manila is making sufficient headway against threats from the Communists and military to survive. The INR and DIA representatives believed that the outline focused too heavily on problems and that some questions were "leading", phrased in such a way as to imply that an analytical judgment had already been made that President Aquino was fairing badly. They asked that the draft SNIE be a balanced assessment.

3. The NIO noted that the estimate, as its title implied, was focusing on the problems in the Philippines because the policy community, through the NSSD currently being drafted by State, was looking for ways the United States could help Manila. The estimate could contribute to that effort better by analyzing problems--and how they could be addressed--rather than Manila's successes.

4. On specific issues:

- o The representatives agreed that the Aquino government had come through the crisis triggered by the 28 August coup attempt, but a DIA analyst objected to the notion that Aquino "had turned the corner".

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- o The DIA representative asked that the estimate include a discussion of civil-military tensions.
- o Representatives disagreed over the current status and outlook for the Communist insurgency, with the DIA representative stating that it is not clear what is happening with the insurgency while a DIA analyst stressed that the threat from the Communists had a political as well as a military component.
- o Representatives could not agree whether rural Filipinos believed they were better off because of the Aquino government or whether, in their view, little had changed in the countryside in the last two years. Similar disagreements surfaced over the implications of the local elections, with INR making the case that the process was a positive step, even though traditional political families appeared to be reemerging. CIA analysts stressed Filipino's disappointment that the local elections demonstrated that traditional Philippine politics, that has never been concerned with the problems and needs of the poor majority, had returned-- despite widespread hopes that the Aquino administration would usher in a new era of participatory democracy.

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